

Message Text

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AMCONSUL DOUALA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJ: TRADE MISSION WRAP-UP

1. SUMMARY. TIMBER EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION LEFT GABON FEBRUARY 26 AFTER THREE BUSY DAYS WELL PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF MISSION. NO IMMEDIATE SALES MADE BUT FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR MOST OF MISSION MEMBERS APPEAR EXCELLENT. END SUMMARY.

2. ON FIRST MORNING OF MISSION FEBRUARY 24, MEMBERS RECEIVED BRIEFING IN EMBASSY FROM AMBASSADOR ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN GABON. THIS FOLLOWED BY HOUR LONG MEETING IN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN WHICH MISSION MEMBERS WELCOMED BY CHAMBER PRESIDENT AYOUNE AND WHERE MEMBERS MADE INITIAL CONTACT WITH LOCAL BUSINESSMEN. AYOUNE'S REMARKS STRESSED THAT PRESENCE OF MISSION WAS PROOF TO GABONESE OF AMERICAN BUSINESS' INTEREST IN GABON. CLOSING OUT MORNING, ENTIRE MISSION MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SOGACEL, WHICH BUILDING THE LARGE PAPER PULP FACTORY IN KANGO. THIS MEETING, WHICH WAS PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT ONE OF MISSION'S STAY, SAW GOOD EXCHANGE ON ALL ASPECTS OF SOGACEL PROJECT AND FIVE OF MISSION MEMBERS SET UP ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS WITH SOGACEL TO DISCUSS EQUIPMENT SALES.

3. AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 24 INVOLVED MEETINGS AT BIC
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IN INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL FOR LAMB, SHEPARD, ZUERCHER AND KOSS

WITH LOCAL END USERS, WHILE OTHER FIVE MEMBERS HAD VARIOUS INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS. IN THE EVENING, AMBASSADOR HOSTED WELL ATTENDED RECEPTION FOR MISSION. ON THE 25TH LAMB, SHEPARD, ZUERCHER AND KOSS VISITED CFG PLYWOOD FACTORY IN PORT-GENTIL, WHILE OTHER FIVE HAD SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH POTENTIAL LOCAL AGENTS AND DISTRIBUTORS AT BIC.

4. ON WEDNESDAY, WHOLE MISSION EXCEPT SHEPARD VISITED SMALL CONCESSION OF BTI (LOCAL SAWMILL) AT NTOUM. VISIT WAS HIGHLIGHT OF MISSION, ENABLING MISSION MEMBERS TO SEE OKOUME TREE CUT, STRIPPED, SKIDDED, LOADED AND DUMPED IN RIVER FOR TRIP TO LIBREVILLE. MOUNTAIN LOGGER WAS BEING USED AT CONCESSION, AND GROUP PICTURE TAKEN AROUND THIS MACHINE SOLD BY ONE OF MISSION'S MEMBERS (FERREX).

5. MISSION MADE OVER FORTY NEW CONTACTS IN ADDITION TO CONTACTS MADE BY TWO FIRMS ALREADY REPRESENTED HERE AND CONTACTS RENEWED FROM PREVIOUS VISITS. WITHOUT EXCEPTION MISSION MEMBERS OPTIMISTIC AND BELIEVE BUSINESS WILL RESULT AND REPRESENTATIVES BE FOUND AS RESULT OF THIS TRIP. FIVE MEMBERS WILL LIKELY BE BIDDING ON PARTS OF SOGACEL PROJECT AND TWO OTHERS HAVE OTHER JOBS TO BID ON--ONE IN DOLS 300-350,000 RANGE. IN ADDITION, SEVERAL MISSION MEMBERS WILL BE VISITED BY LOCAL BUSINESSMEN IN U.S. TO SEE THEIR EQUIPMENT FIRSTHAND.

6. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT PERHAPS MOST VALUABLE FACET OF MISSION WAS THAT IT ALLOWED MANY OF MISSION MEMBERS TO MAKE INITIAL CONTACTS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AND HEAR ABOUT LOCAL PROJECTS FIRSTHAND. VIRTUALLY ALL HAVE PLANS TO FOLLOW UP, EITHER HERE OR IN EUROPE, WHICH EMBASSY BELIEVES WILL BE THE KEY TO HOW MUCH BUSINESS ACTUALLY RESULTS FROM MISSION VISIT.

7. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND COMMERCE ADVANCE OFFICER OCWIEJA FOR HIS INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE. HIS MEMOS OF ADVANCE CALLS SERVED AS USEFUL BRIEFING MATERIAL FOR MISSION MEMBERS. ASST. MISSION DIRECTOR RENBOURG'S ASSISTANCE DURING MISSION STAY, PARTICULARLY IN BIC, UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS EXTREMELY HELPFUL AND DIRECTOR BRANIGAR WAS WILLING AND ABLE TO AID IN KEEPING MISSION MEMBERS TO THEIR SCHEDULE.

8. EMBASSY REGRETS IT WAS NECESSARY FOR EVERGREEN TO DROP OUT AT LAST MOMENT AS THEIR PRESENCE ON MISSION HAD RAISED MOST PRELIMINARY INTEREST LOCALLY. SEVERAL LOCAL BUSINESSMEN COMMENTED ON THEIR ABSENCE. HOPE IT

WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR EVERGREEN TO MAKE VISIT TO GABON
ON ITS OWN SOMETIME IN FUTURE.MCKESSON

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